**Henry Ford: A Giant of a Man**

*When people hear the name Henry Ford, they often think of cars. Henry Ford was a giant in the world of automobiles. Ford built many different cars. However, his biggest achievement was in how his cars were made.*

**The Early Years**

Henry Ford was born in 1863, and he grew up on his family farm. But he didn’t like having to do the farm chores. Instead, Ford preferred mechanical things and spent his time trying to fix machines. He developed a strong interest in engines. A special engine, one that could power an automobile, fascinated Ford. This interest led to Ford building his own car called the Quadracycle. He also began building race cars and won many races.

**A Business Begins**

In the early 1900s, cars broke down often. They were expensive to repair and hard to drive on rough country roads. They also cost so much that few people could afford to buy them. Henry Ford wanted to change that. He wanted to sell cars at prices everyone could afford. In 1903, Ford started his own company. He called it the Ford Motor Company. He began building cars that had more reliable engines so they wouldn’t break down and were easier to repair. This led to a simple car called the Model T. The Model T was a huge success, and Ford Motor Company sold more cars than all the other automakers put together.

Americans loved the Model T. Ford had so many orders, he could not fill them, but he was still not satisfied. The Model T was a good car, but Ford’s big success didn’t come simply because of this invention. It came from the new way he built his cars. In 1908, the Model T cost around $850. That was still too expensive for many people. Ford set out a way to lower the price. He succeeded and by 1913, the price of a Model T was lower than $500.

**A New Process**

How could Ford sell his cars at such a low price? Ford’s idea was simple, yet very smart. He developed a new way to make cars using an assembly line. While the cars were being put together, they moved along on a slow-moving belt. The first workers on the assembly line made one part of the car, starting with the frame. The car proceeded down the belt, and the second workers added the next part. The car continued moving as new parts were added. By the time the car reached the end of the line, it was completely built.

This assembly line approach allowed Ford to make cars both faster and cheaper. Because of this, Ford was able to pay his workers much more than any of the other companies could pay. In fact, before the assembly line, workers were paid $2.34 per day. Ford began paying his workers $5.00 per day. And, he had them work one hour less each day than they had been working before.

**The Ford Legacy**

Ford died in 1947. Companies all over the U.S. and the world adopted his method of making cars. Before he died, he arranged for his family to keep the company. Many Fords have helped run the company, and the Ford Motor Company is still making cars today.

1. What caused Henry Ford to become interested in automobiles?
2. He wanted to create a way people could travel quickly.
3. He discovered people would pay a lot of money for cars.
4. He hoped to be a race car driver when he was old enough.
5. He learned about engines by fixing machines on his family farm.
6. Before the Model T, why did few people own a car?
7. People were happy using the Quadracycle.
8. Companies paid their workers very little money.
9. Cars broke down often and were expensive to fix.
10. Only people who lived in the country owned a car.
11. How was Henry Ford able to make cars both faster and cheaper?
12. He only hired the quickest workers and paid them more than other companies.
13. He got rid of the workers who were slow and replaced them with better workers.
14. He paid his workers more money and had them work less than other companies did.
15. He created a system of cars moving on a belt and workers would add one part at a time.
16. Henry Ford was able to successfully sell the Model T to many people because he
17. was famous for inventing the Quadracycle.
18. found a way to lower the cost of the car.
19. developed a special engine for it.
20. used it to win many races.
21. How did Henry Ford’s approach to making cars affect other automobile companies?
22. They copied his method of the assembly line.
23. They made cars that looked just like the Model T.
24. They began paying their employees more money.
25. They built cars that were more reliable than the Model T.
26. Read these sentences from the passage.

**He developed a strong interest in engines. A special engine, one that could power an automobile, fascinated Ford.**

What is the meaning of the word *fascinated* as used in the sentence above?

1. to capture your full attention
2. to work with dangerous objects
3. to believe you will be successful
4. to be forgetful in completing a task
5. Which event happened AFTER Henry Ford started his own company but BEFORE he was able to lower the price of a car?
6. Henry did chores on his family farm.
7. Henry gave his business to his family.
8. Henry created a simple and reliable car.
9. Henry asked his employees to work less.
10. Using information from the passage, with which statement would the author MOST LIKELY agree?

1. Henry Ford changed the way the world made cars.
2. The Ford Motor Company would be a great place to work.
3. The Model T was a better car than the ones being built today.
4. The Quadracycle was the greatest achievement for Henry Ford.
5. Under which heading would you find information about how Henry started his company?
6. The Early Years
7. A Business Begins
8. A New Process
9. The Ford Legacy
10. How were the Quadracycle and the Model T SIMILAR?
11. Both were expensive to repair.
12. Both were fast enough to race.
13. Both were powered using engines.
14. Both were easy to drive on country roads.

Answer Key:

1. Correct Answer D, DOK 2
2. Correct Answer C, DOK 2
3. Correct Answer D, DOK 3
4. Correct Answer B, DOK 2
5. Correct Answer A, DOK 2
6. Correct Answer A, DOK 2
7. Correct Answer C, DOK 3
8. Correct Answer A, DOK 3
9. Correct Answer B, DOK 2
10. Correct Answer C, DOK 3